

Message Text

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LANDSOUTHEAST

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 1493

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TU, GR, CY

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF TURKISH MFA OFFICIAL ON CYPRUS AND AEGEAN
PROBLEMS

1. ON FEBRUARY 24 EKREM GUVENDIRN, MFA DEPUTY DIRECTOR
FOR GREECE AND CYPRUS AFFAIRS, GAVE EMBOFF FOLLOWING RUNDOWN
ON FIFTH ROUND OF CYPRUS INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS:

A. IN GENERAL, IN TURKISH VIEW, "NOTHING HAPPENED AT
VIENNA". ALTHOUGH TURK CYPRIOT REP DENKTASH EVENTUALLY
PRESENTED THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH TURKISH SIDE WOULD EVALUATE
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TERRITORIAL PROBLEMS, GREEK CYPRIOT REP CLERIDES HAD "DILLYDALLIED

AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS WHICH NEVER ARRIVED". UNSYG WALDHEIM PROPOSED AN EXTENSION OF THE TALKS UNTIL FEBRUARY 24 TO GIVE CLERIDES TIME TO GET INSTRUCTIONS, BUT CLERIDES DECLINED. AFTER CLERIDES PRESENTED A TERRITORIAL MAP WHICH BORE A SPECIFIC DISCLAIMER THAT IT WAS NOT A TERRITORIAL PROPOSAL, DENKTASH TESTED HIM BY ASKING WHETHER CLERIDES WOULD BE WILLING TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT IF THE TURKISH SIDE ACCEPTED THE MAP AS A TERRITORIAL PROPOSAL. CLERIDES SAID HE WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE WILLING TO SIGN. AGAIN, AFTER CLERIDES HAD DRAWN SOME "SHAPES" ON THE KARPAS PENINSULA, DENKTASH ASKED IF THOSE SHAPES WOULD REPRESENT THE END OF THE GREEK CYPRIOT TERRITORIAL DEMANDS. CLERIDES ANSWERED THAT THEY WOULD NOT.

B. WALDHEIM FINALLY PROPOSED THAT CLERIDES SUBMIT WRITTEN PROPOSALS ON TERRITORY THROUGH UN SPECREP PEREZ WITHIN SIX WEEKS, FOLLOWING WHICH THE TURKISH SIDE WOULD BE BOUND TO REPLY WITHIN TEN DAYS. (GUVENDIREN PREDICTED THAT THE TURKISH REPLY WOULD SIMPLY BE A RESTATEMENT OF THE CRITERIA THAT DENKTASH HAD ALREADY PRESENTED AT VIENNA.) WALDHEIM FURTHER PROPOSED THAT CLERIDES AND DENKTASH MEET AGAIN IN MAY AFTER THE TURKISH CYPRIOT ELECTIONS, WHICH PRESUMABLY WOULD BE COMPLETED BY THEN. THE TWO REPRESENTATIVES AT THAT TIME WOULD DISCUSS THE WRITTEN PROPOSALS AND REFER THEM TO SUBCOMMITTEES. (GUVENDIREN SAID THAT THE SUBCOMMITTEES WOULD IN EFFECT OPEN THE TALKS TO PARTICIPATION BY ATHENS AND ANKARA BECAUSE OF THE PRESENCE OF MAINLAND ZADVISORS".)

2. AFTER THIS BRIEFING, GUVENDIREN WENT ON TO OFFER THESE COMMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS:

A. "WE HAVE CONCLUDED", GUVENDIREN SAID, THAT NEITHER THE GREEKS NOR THE GREEK CYPRIOTS WANT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. INSTEAD, THEY WANT TO USE THE CYPRUS ISSUE FOR PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE AGAINST TURKEY. THE GREEK SIDE HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN CREATING WIDESPREAD SYMPATHY IN WESTERN EUROPE AND THE U.S. THEY WANT TO MAINTAIN THAT SYMPATHY AND USE IT FOR THE FOLLOWING GOALS: (1) TO KEEP THE U.S. ARMS EMBARGO IN EFFECT, THUS WEAKENING TURKEY MILITARILY; (2) TO BRING GREECE UNDER THE "POLITICAL UMBRELLA OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, THUS ACQUIRING FURTHER IMMUNITY FROM TURKISH PRESSURE AND SECURING CONFIDENTIAL

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FOR THEMSELVES A PRIVILEGED POSITION IN THE BALKANS"; (3) TO MAKE THE AEGEAN A GREEK LAKE IN TERMS OF ITS AIR SPACE, IT SURFACE NAVIGATION, AND ITS MINERAL RESOURCES. IN SHORT, HE SAID, THE REAL ISSUE BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY IS THE AEGEAN, WHILE "CYPRUS IS A SIDESHOW".

B. GUVENDIREN SAID THAT "WE STRONGLY SUSPECT" THAT GREEK PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS HAS BEEN ASSENTING TO THE GREEK

CYPRIOT POLICY OF RESISTANCE TO MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD
A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT IN THE CURRENT CLERIDES-DENKTASH TALKS.

C. TURKEY WILL NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE ITS POLICY OF COOPERATING
IN EFFORTS TO FIND A SETTLEMENT AND TAKING A REASONABLE STANCE IN
ORDER TO SHOW THE WORLD THAT IT IS GREECE AND THE GREEK CYPRIOTS
WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BLOCKING AN ACCORD. GUVENDIREN OBSERVED
THAT HE WAS PLEASED BY TURKEY'S DECISION TO ADOPT THIS APPROACH
IN PLACE OF ITS EARLIER RECALCITRANCE WHICH, HE SAID, HAD BEEN UN-
FAIRLY BLAMED ON DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ERBAKAN.

D. TURKEY WAS CLOSELY WATCHING THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN
THE U.S. AND GREECE. THE TERMS THAT ARE NEGOTIATED AND THE
RECEPTION THAT THESE TERMS MEET WITH IN CONGRESS WILL BE EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT FOR TURKEY, HE SAID.

E. THE U.S. POLICY OF MAINTAINING A BALANCE BETWEEN GREECE
AND TURKEY SO AS TO PREVENT A WAR HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY WEAKENED
BY THE ARMS EMBARGO, GUVENDIREN OBSERVED. IF THE U.S. IS
NOT TO FACE A NEW DANGER OF GREEK-TURKISH HOSTILITIES, IT MUST
FIND A WAY OF REENERGIZING THIS POLICY, HE PREDICTED.

F. GUVENDIREN SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY INTERPRETED THE
TURKISH EXERCISES IN THE AEGEAN FEBRUARY 25-26 AS AN ASSERTION
OF TURKEY'S NON-ACCEPTANCE OF GREECE'S CLAIM TO A 10-MILE
LIMIT IN AIR SPACE AROUND ITS ISLANDS. HE WAS HIMSELF HIGHLY
CONCERNED THAT IF THE AIR SPACE ISSUE REMAINED UNSETTLED, IT
WOULD CONTINUE TO POSE A CONSTANT DANGER OF INCIDENTS THAT COULD
PROVOKE GREEK-TURKISH HOSTILITIES. AS AN EXAMPLE, HE POINTED
OUT THAT A TURKISH AIRCRAFT MIGHT FLY OVER A GREEK ISLAND AND
BE SHOT DOWN BY A GREEK ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILE, WHICH WOULD BE
A SEVERE CHALLENGE TO TURKEY.

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3. COMMENT: GUVENDIREN HAS LONG BEEN KNOWN FOR HIS "GLOOM
AND DOOM" ATTITUDE, AND HE MAY WELL BE OUT OF PHASE WITH THE
THINKING OF THE TOP LEVEL OF HIS MINISTRY, TO JUDGE BY THE MORE
OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK REFLECTED BY SECGEN ELEKDAG IN HIS TALKS WITH
THE AMBASSADOR, (ELEKDAG TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT FOLLOWING
THE FIFTH ROUND OF TALKS AT VIENNA THERE WAS "GUARDED
OPTIMISM" IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT A PROCESS MAY
BE UNDERWAY THAT WILL LEAD TO A RESOLUTION OF THIS PROBLEM.)
FURTHERMORE, GUVENDIREN, WHEN ASKED WHETHER THE VIEWS HE HAD
EXPRESSED WERE HIS OWN OR REFLECTED HIS GOVERNMENT'S OUTLOOK,
SAID THAT THEY WERE HIS VIEWS BUT WERE SHARED BY "A NUMBER OF
OTHERS".

4. OUR CONCLUSION IS THAT GUVENDIREN WAS SPEAKING SINCERELY
AND IN RESPONSE TO HIS INNATE PESSIMISM ON THIS ISSUE. AT

THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HE DOES NOT MISS MANY OPPORTUNITIES
TO STRESS THAT THE EMBARGO AGAINST TURKEY IS A DISINCENTIVE TO
THE GREEKS TO NEGOTIATE SINCERELY.
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